

## 136-536 Scientific Realism and Anti-Realism

<b>Credit Points:</b>	12.50
<b>Level:</b>	4 (Undergraduate)
<b>Dates &amp; Locations:</b>	2009, This subject commences in the following study period/s: Semester 2, - Taught on campus.
<b>Time Commitment:</b>	Contact Hours: A 2-hour seminar per week Total Time Commitment: 2 contact hours/week, 8 additional hours/week. Total of 10 hours per week.
<b>Prerequisites:</b>	Usually admission to the postgraduate diploma or fourth-year honours or a postgraduate coursework program.
<b>Corequisites:</b>	None
<b>Recommended Background Knowledge:</b>	None
<b>Non Allowed Subjects:</b>	None
<b>Core Participation Requirements:</b>	<p>&lt;p&gt;For the purposes of considering request for Reasonable Adjustments under the Disability Standards for Education (Cwth 2005), and Student Support and Engagement Policy, academic requirements for this subject are articulated in the Subject Overview, Learning Outcomes, Assessment and Generic Skills sections of this entry.&lt;/p&gt; <p>&lt;p&gt;It is University policy to take all reasonable steps to minimise the impact of disability upon academic study, and reasonable adjustments will be made to enhance a student's participation in the University's programs. Students who feel their disability may impact on meeting the requirements of this subject are encouraged to discuss this matter with a Faculty Student Adviser and Student Equity and Disability Support: &lt;a href="http://services.unimelb.edu.au/disability"&gt;http://services.unimelb.edu.au/disability&lt;/a&gt;&lt;/p&gt;</p> </p>
<b>Coordinator:</b>	Assoc Prof Howard Sankey
<b>Contact:</b>	Assoc Prof Howard Sankey - chs@unimelb.edu.au
<b>Subject Overview:</b>	This subject examines the contemporary debate between realism and anti-realism in the philosophy of science. The scientific realist argues that science is to be understood as the attempt to discover the truth about the objective world. Anti-realists of various kinds argue against scientific realism in various ways, for example, by arguing from the falsity of past theories to the falsity of current theories, or by insisting on the epistemic limitations of observational evidence. We will consider the main arguments for scientific realism, as well as some of the most important objections that have been levelled against the realist position. We will also examine a number of contemporary versions of scientific realism as well as alternatives to realism.
<b>Objectives:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># have advanced knowledge of some central themes of current debate in philosophy of science;</li> <li># have an advanced ability to critically analyse philosophical arguments, and to conduct research in the philosophy of science;</li> <li># have experience with methods of critical analysis and argument employed in the philosophy of science, leading to improved general reasoning and analytical skills.</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment:</b>	A 5000-word research essay 100% (due at the end of semester).
<b>Prescribed Texts:</b>	Readings for this subject will be available online.
<b>Breadth Options:</b>	This subject is not available as a breadth subject.
<b>Fees Information:</b>	Subject EFTSL, Level, Discipline & Census Date, <a href="http://enrolment.unimelb.edu.au/fees">http://enrolment.unimelb.edu.au/fees</a>
<b>Generic Skills:</b>	# have experience of thinking systematically about difficult problems of an abstract nature;

	# have practice conducting research, speaking articulately, writing clearly and reading with attention to detail.
<b>Notes:</b>	Formerly available as 136-510, 136-638, 136-348 and 136-048 and as 136-536 Realism, Relativism and Naturalism. Students who have completed 136-510, 136-638, 136-348, 136-536 or 136-048 are not eligible to enrol in this subject.
<b>Related Course(s):</b>	M.A.History & Philosophy of Science (Advanced Seminars & Shorter Thesis) Master of Arts (Science, Communication and Society)
<b>Related Majors/Minors/ Specialisations:</b>	History and Philosophy of Science History and Philosophy of Science Philosophy Philosophy Philosophy